



GANESHA AND THE MOON

AND OTHER STORIES

Vol 830





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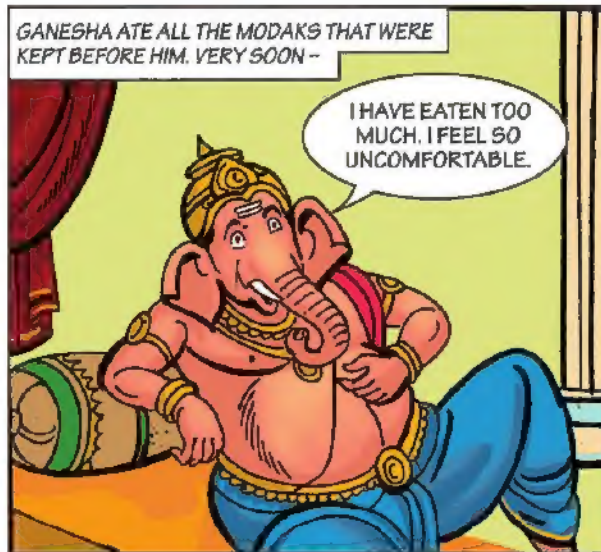
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GANESHA AND THE MOON

ONCE ON HIS BIRTHDAY, GANESHA WAS INVITED TO CHANDRALOK, THE ABODE OF THE MOON, FOR A FEAST.



*A SWEET DUMPLING FILLED WITH COCONUT AND JAGGERY

** THE MOUSE IS GANESHA'S 'VAHANA' OR STEED

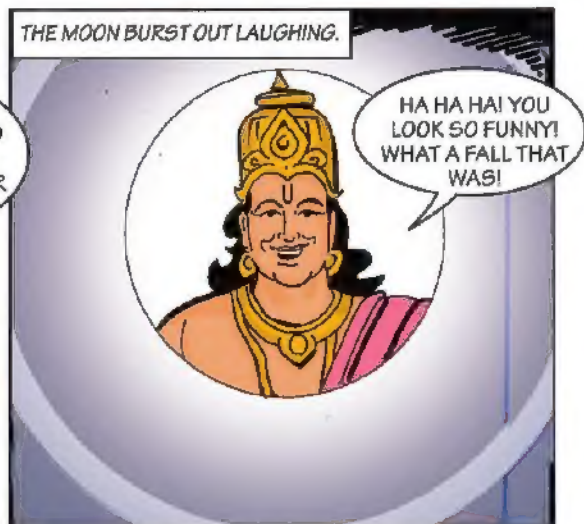
IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT. THE MOON SHONE SO BRIGHTLY, IT WAS ALMOST LIKE DAY!



SUDDENLY—



THE MOON BURST OUT LAUGHING.



GANESHA WAS VERY ANGRY, BUT FIRST, HE PUT ALL THE MODAKS BACK...



HA HA HA!

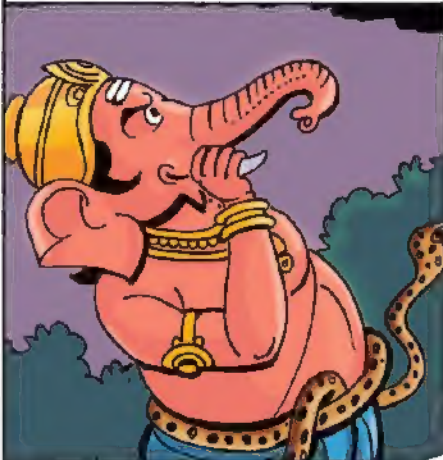
... AND USED THE SNAKE TO TIE HIS STOMACH UP.



HO HO HO!

THE MOON JUST WOULD NOT STOP LAUGHING.

GANESHA BROKE OFF A PIECE OF HIS TUSK...



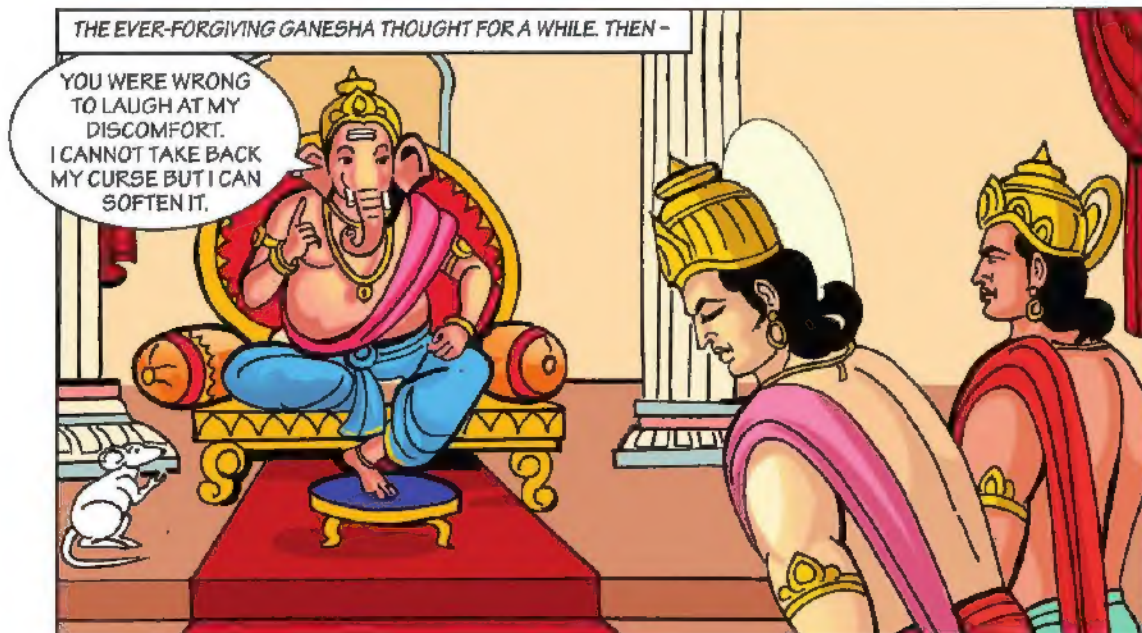
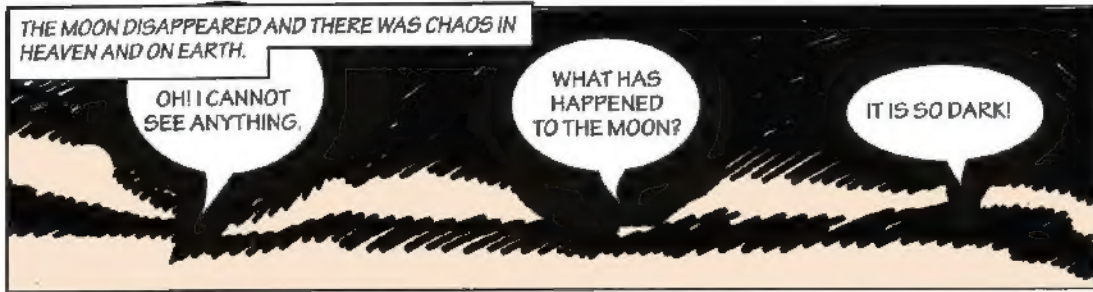
...AND HURLED IT, FURIOUSLY...

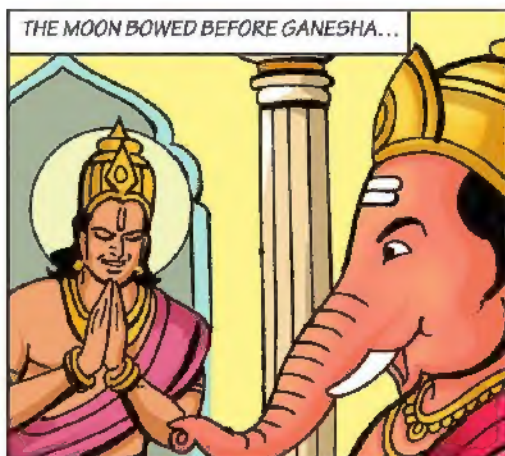
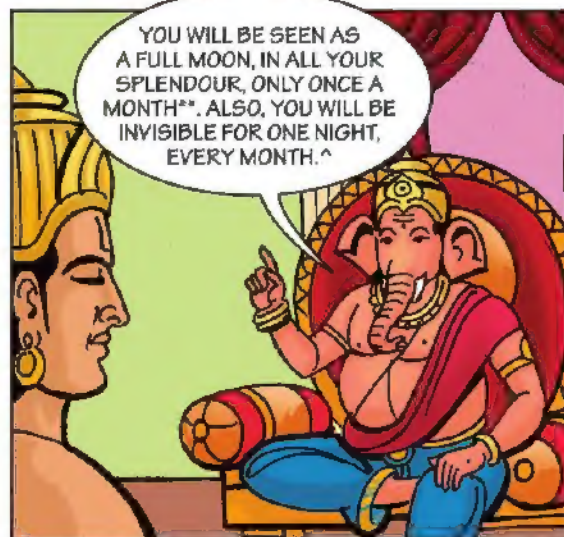
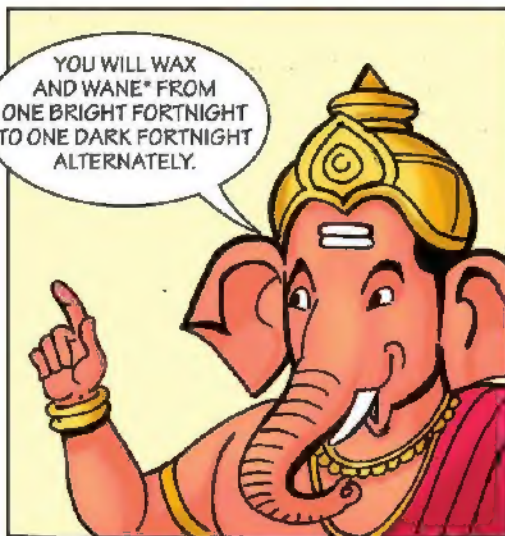


...SLASHING THE MOON'S LUMINOUS FACE.



O FOOLISH MOON!
YOUR UNBLEMISHED
APPEARANCE HAS MADE
YOU VAIN! I COMMAND YOU
TO VANISH FROM THE
UNIVERSE!





*ALTERNATELY GROWING SMALLER AND LARGER

*PURNIMA OR POURNAMI
^AMAVASYA

GANESHA AND RAVANA

RAVANA, THE DEMON KING OF LANKA, OBSERVED SEVERE PENANCE TO PLEASE SHIVA.

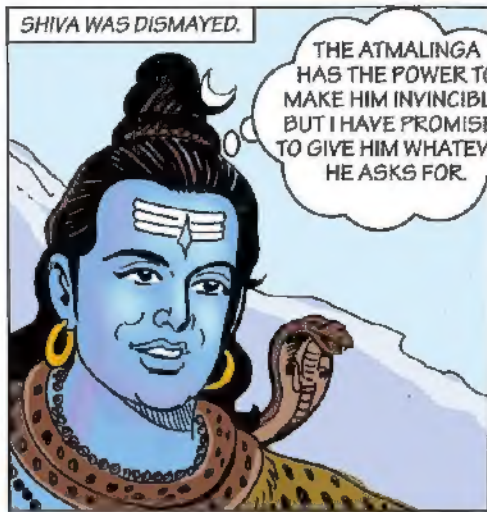


PLEASED WITH HIS AUSTERITIES, SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



* SALUTATIONS TO SHIVA

** THE ATMALINGA IS A FORM IN WHICH SHIVA IS WORSHIPPED.



THE ATMALINGA HAS THE POWER TO MAKE HIM INVINCIBLE. BUT I HAVE PROMISED TO GIVE HIM WHATEVER HE ASKS FOR.



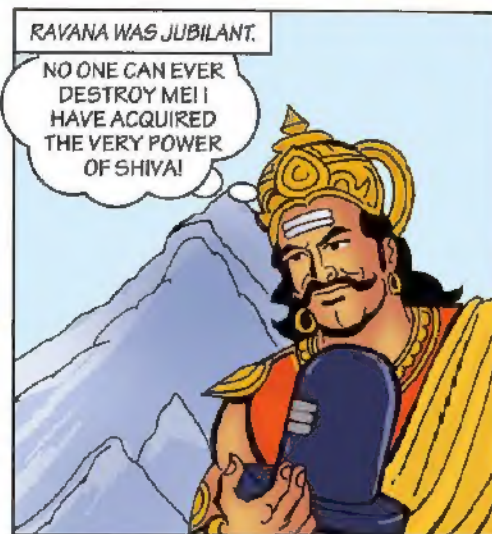
YOU MUST WALK ALL THE WAY TO LANKA HOLDING THE ATMALINGA IN YOUR HANDS.

IT'S A LONG WAY FROM MOUNT KAILASH TO LANKA, BUT I CAN DO IT.



DON'T PUT THE ATMALINGA DOWN. IF YOU DO, EVEN FOR A MOMENT, IT WILL STAY ROOTED TO THAT SPOT FOR EVER.

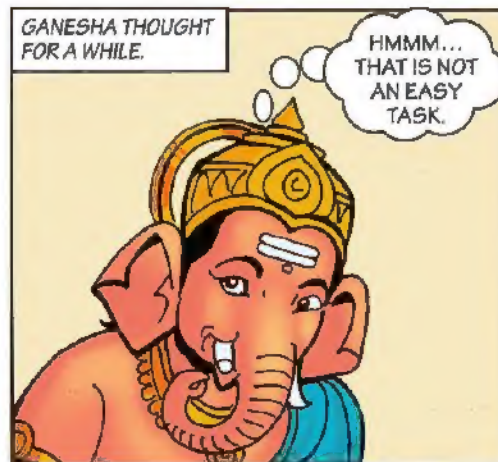
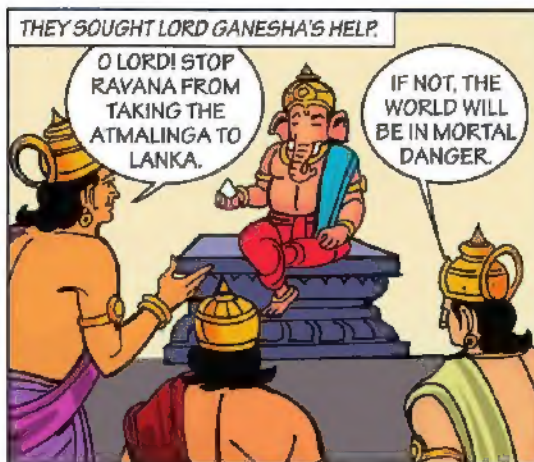
AND THEN SHIVA DISAPPEARED.



RAVANA WAS JUBILANT.

NO ONE CAN EVER DESTROY ME! I HAVE ACQUIRED THE VERY POWER OF SHIVA!





* SALUTATIONS TO YOU, O VIGHNESHWARA
VIGHNESHWARA - ONE WHO REMOVES OBSTACLES

GANESHA FOLLOWED RAVANA.

THERE HE IS!
HE MUST NOT
SEE ME.

RAVANA IS
A STICKLER FOR
RITUALS. HE HAS TO
PERFORM THE EVENING
PRAYERS AT SUNSET
EVERY DAY.

RAVANA WALKED VERY FAST. HE SOON
REACHED THE WEST COAST AND STRODE
ALONG THE DESERTED SEA SHORE.

NOW IS MY
CHANCE!

GANESHA INVOKED THE POWER OF LORD VISHNU
TO BLOCK OUT THE SUN

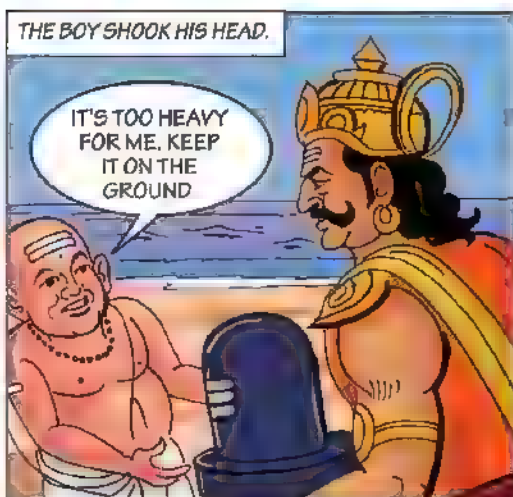
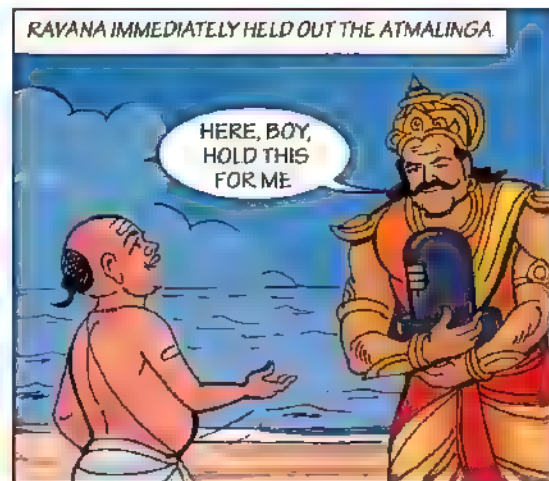
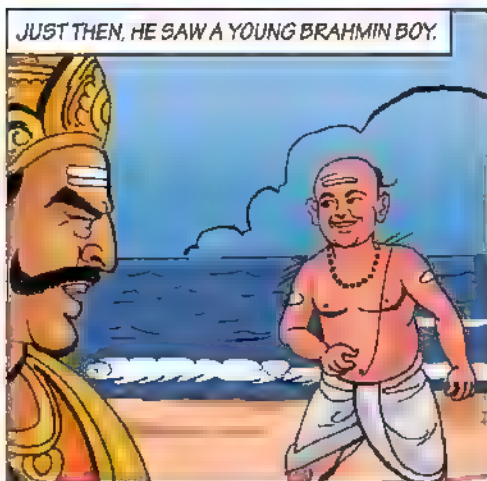
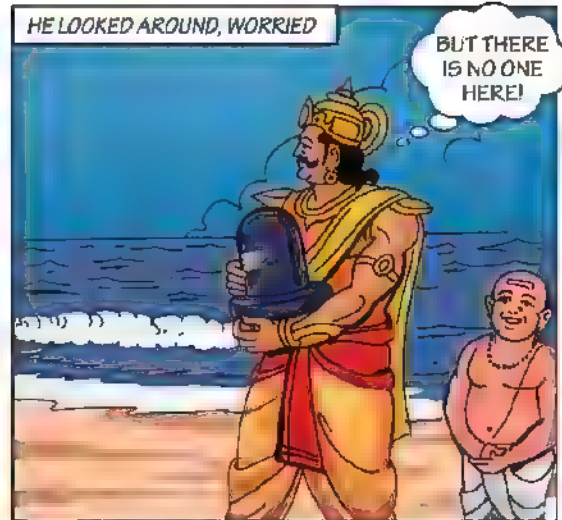
RAVANA WAS PUZZLED FOR A MOMENT.

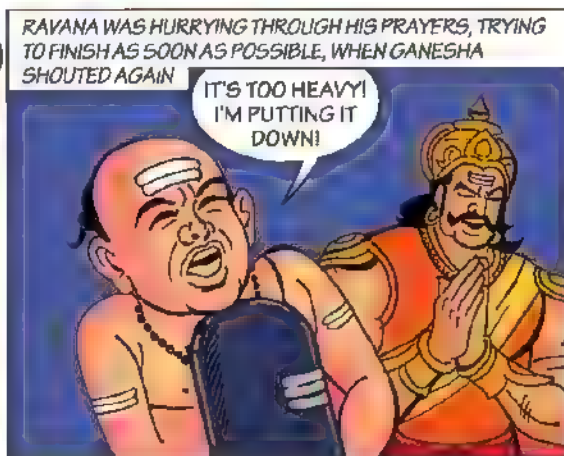
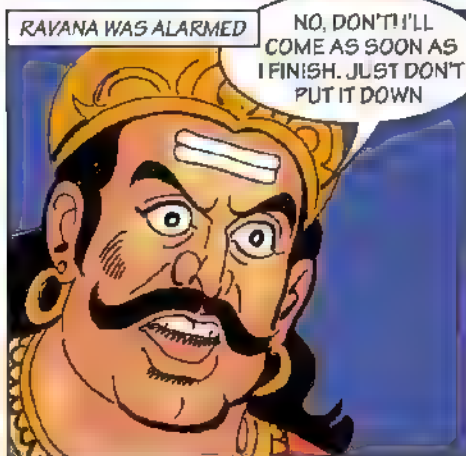
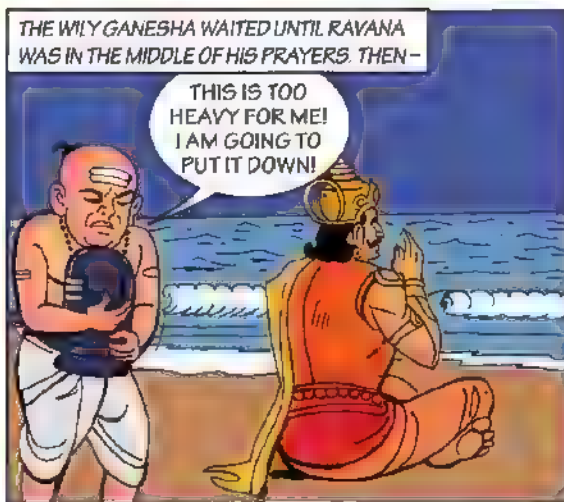
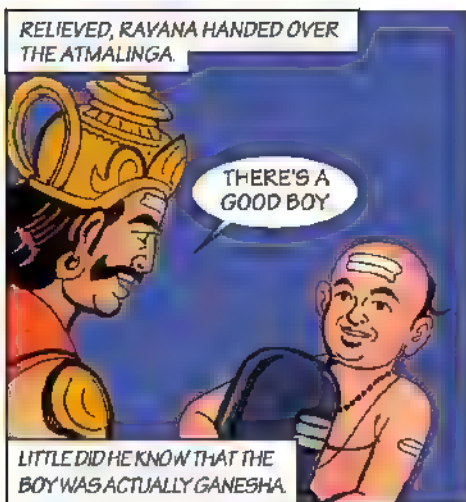
STRANGE HOW
THE SUN SET SO
SUDDENLY!

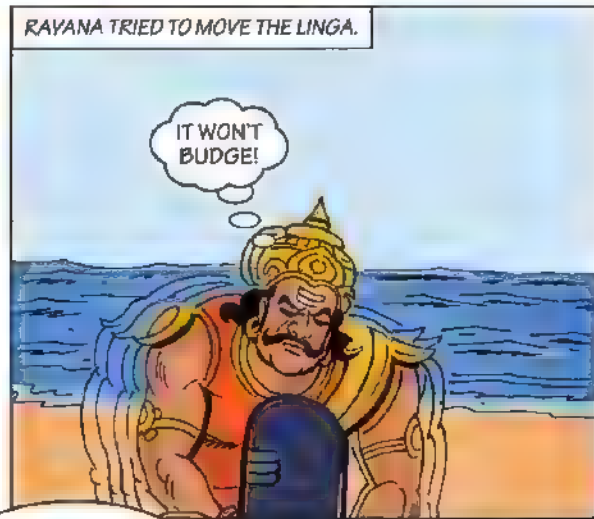
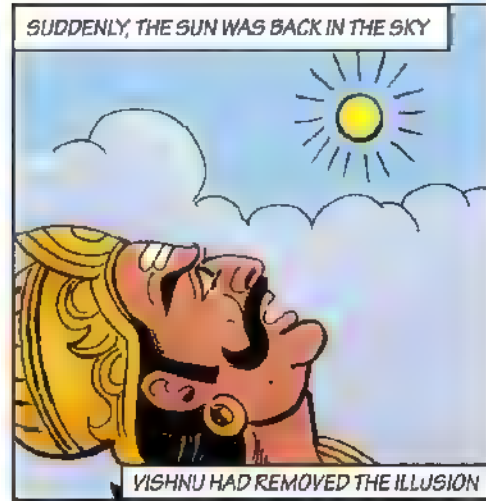
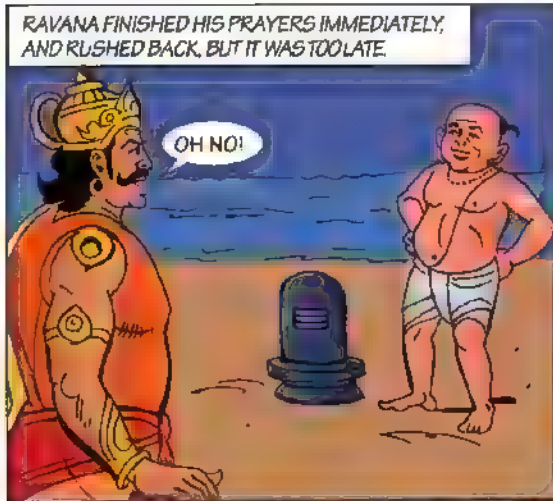
BUT HE WAS UNSUSPECTING

IT IS TIME FOR
ME TO SAY
MY EVENING
PRAYERS

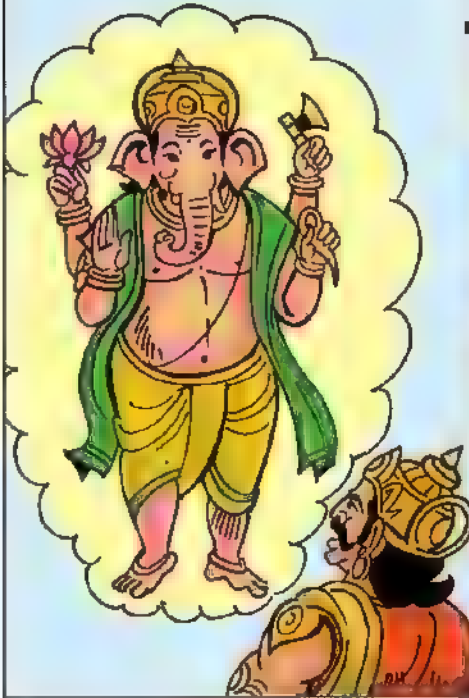
AH, YOU
CREATURE OF
HABITS. THIS WILL
CAUSE YOUR
DEFEAT



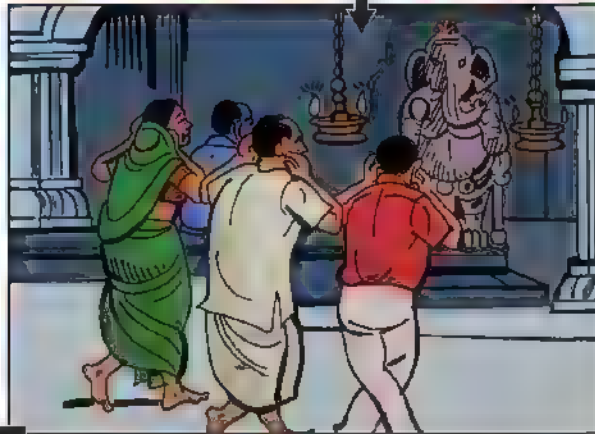
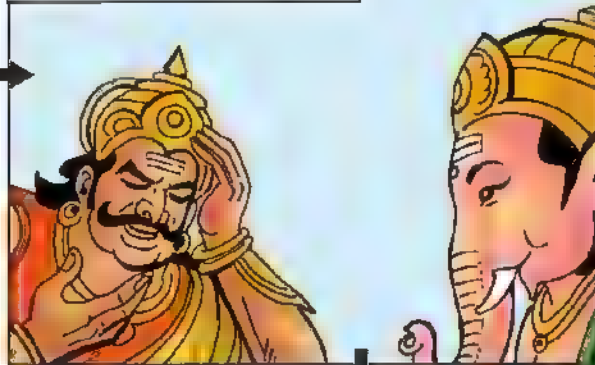




THEN GANESHA ASSUMED HIS TRUE FORM.



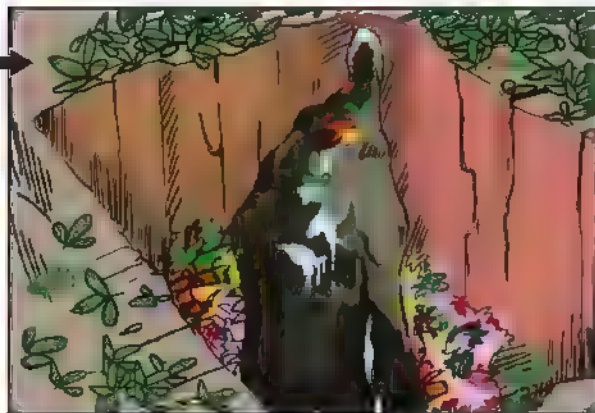
REALISING WHAT HE HAD DONE,
RAVANA BOWED BEFORE GANESHA.



THE TEMPLE OVER THE ATMALINGA IS CALLED
THE MAHABALESHWAR TEMPLE. 'MAHABALA'
MEANS GREAT POWER AND 'ISHWAR' MEANS
GOD.



THE PLACE WHERE GANESHA PLACED THE ATMALINGA IS
BELIEVED TO BE IN GOKARNA, KARNATAKA. THERE IS A TEMPLE
BUILT AROUND THE ATMALINGA. NEXT TO IT IS A SHRINE OF
GANESHA, WHERE THE IDOL HAS A DENT ON ITS FOREHEAD,
SYMBOLISING THE INCIDENT.



THE GREAT FORCE EXERTED BY RAVANA ON THE LINGA IS SAID
TO HAVE CHANGED ITS SHAPE. THE LINGA NOW RESEMBLES
THE EAR OF A COW. IN FACT, THE NAME GOKARNA, COMES
FROM THIS 'GO' - COW AND 'KARNAM' - EAR.

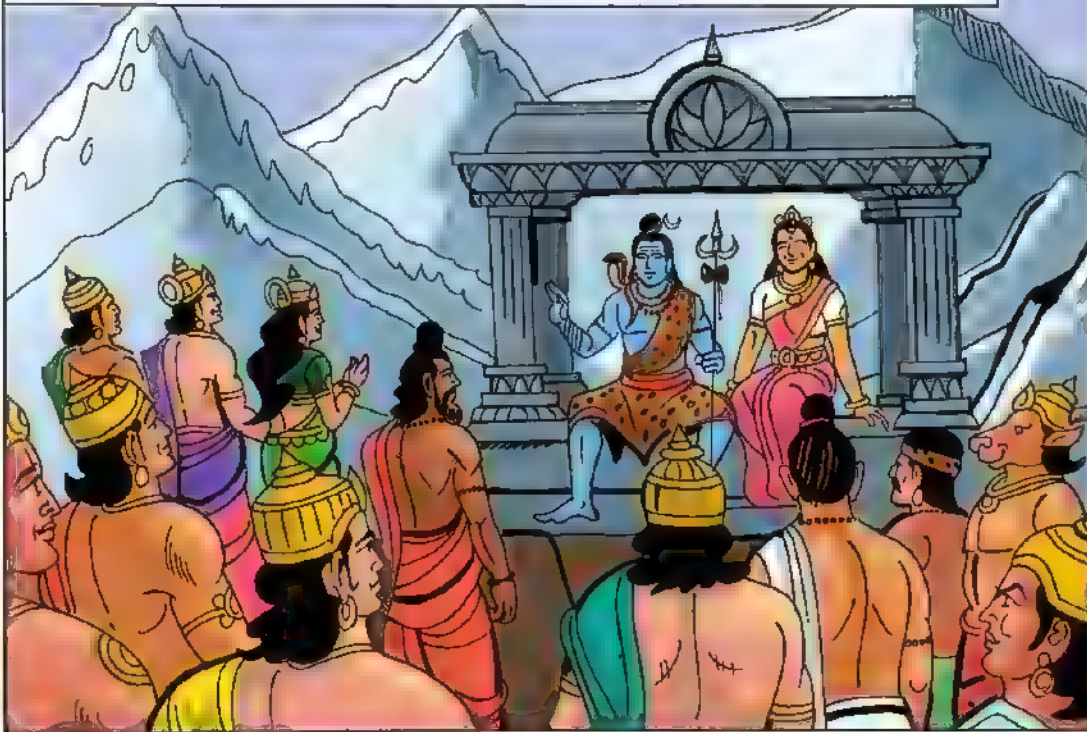
GANESHA RELEASES KAVERI



THE RIVER KAVERI IS OFTEN CALLED THE GANGA OF SOUTH INDIA. IT ORIGINATES IN THE BRAHMAHILL IN COORG, IN A PLACE CALLED TALAKAVERI* MANY STORIES ARE TOLD ABOUT HOW THE KAVERI CAME TO FLOW IN THIS REGION.

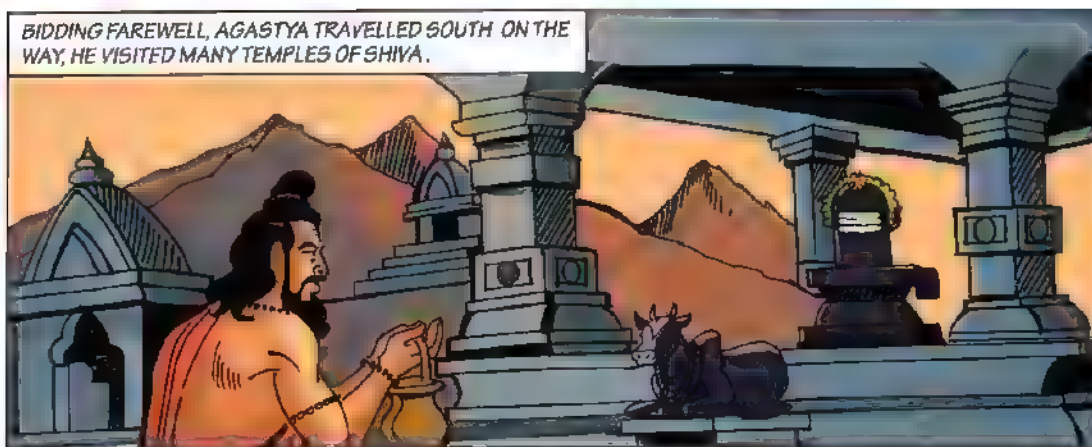
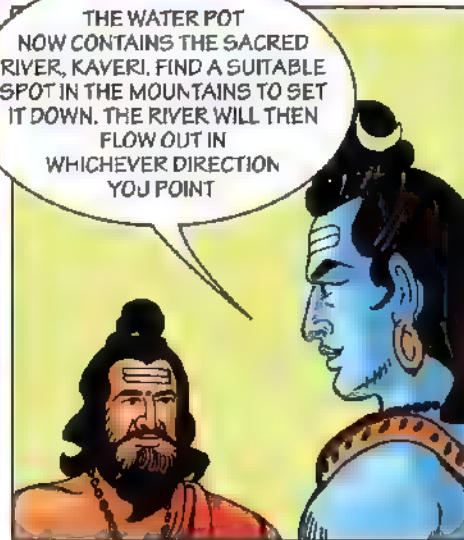
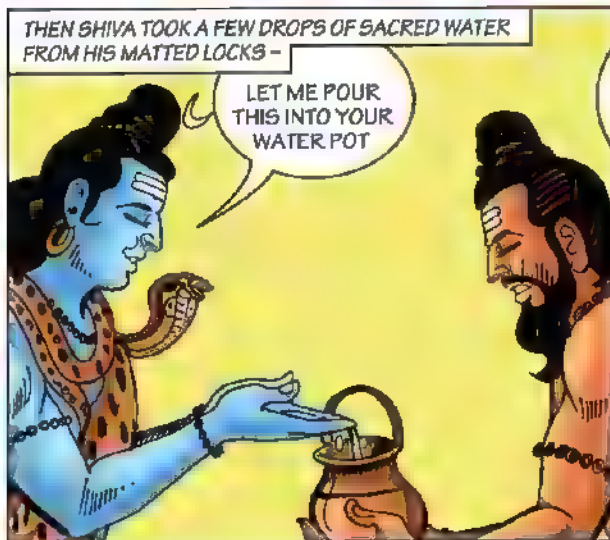
* POINT OF ORIGIN OF THE KAVERI

ONE SUCH STORY BEGINS AT THE WEDDING OF SHIVA AND PARVATI. IT WAS AN AUSPICIOUS OCCASION. ALL THE GODS, GODDESSES AND SAGES GATHERED AT MOUNT KAILASH, IN THE HIMALAYAS.



SUDDENLY THE GROUND STARTED TO SINK.





* THE SEVEN SAGES WHO WERE BORN FROM BRAHMA'S MIND
** IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE WESTERN GHATS

TIME PASSED AND AGASTYA WANDERED IN THE SOUTHERN LANDS, LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT PLACE TO SET DOWN KAYERI. IN THE MEANTIME, INDRA, KING OF THE GODS, WAS ATTACKED BY A POWERFUL DEMON NAMED SURAPADMAN.

SURAPADMAN
HAS THE UPPER
HAND. I MUST
ESCAPE.

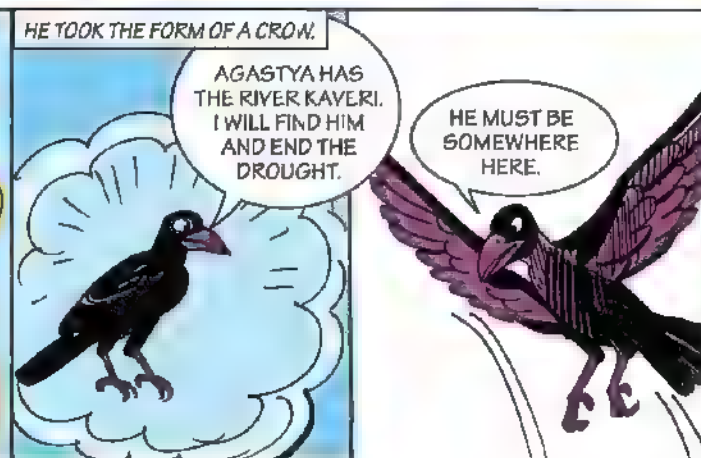
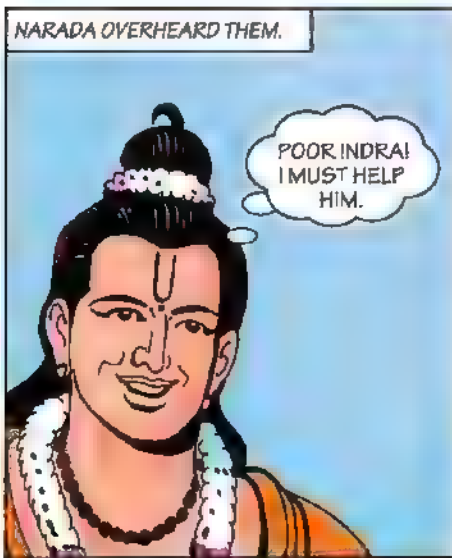
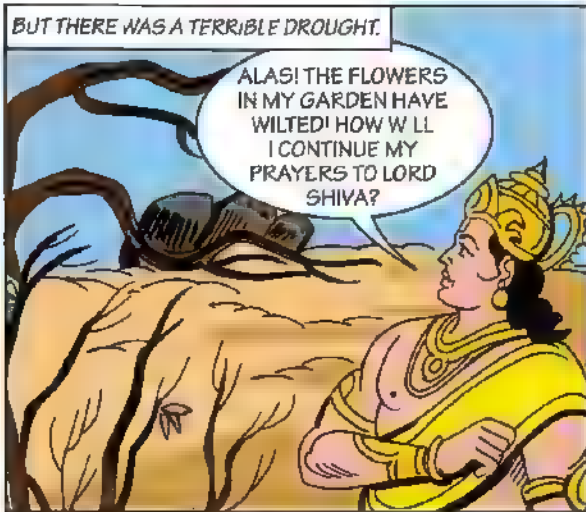


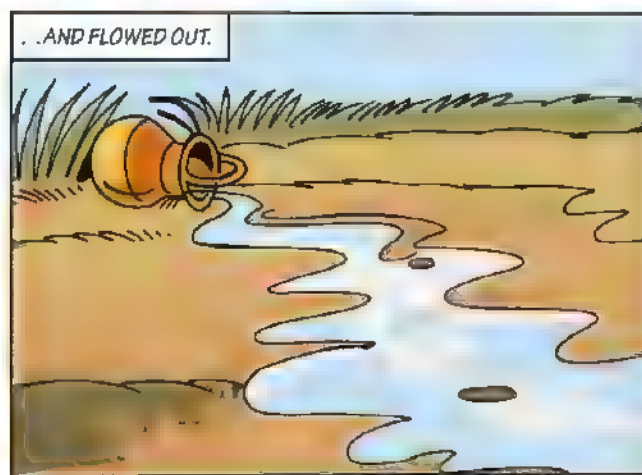
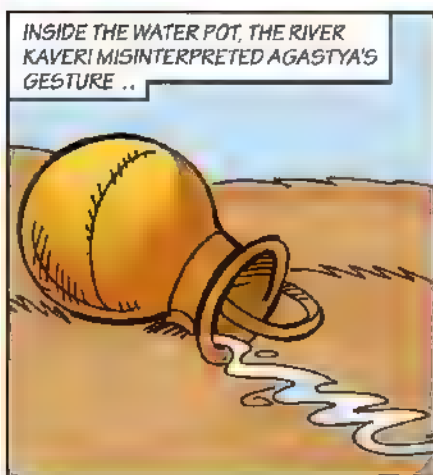
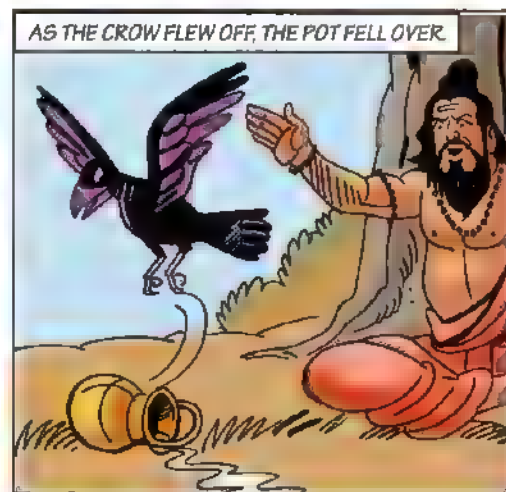
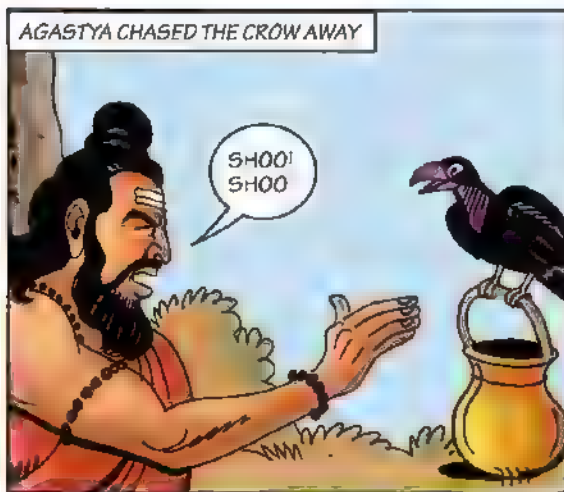
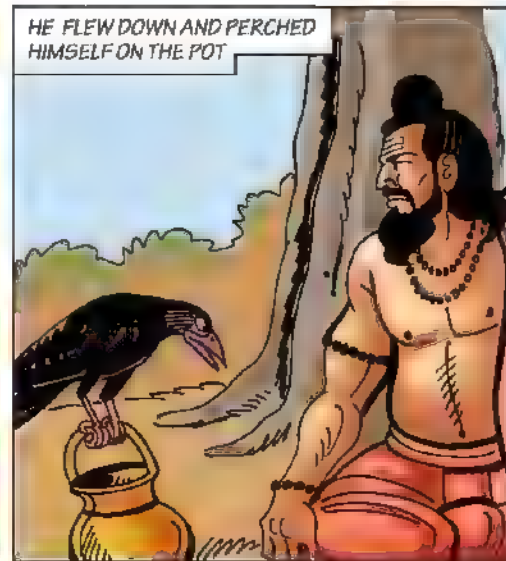
INDRA FLED TO THE EARTH. HE STOPPED AT A PLACE CALLED SIRGAZHI, WHERE HE CREATED A MAGNIFICENT GARDEN.

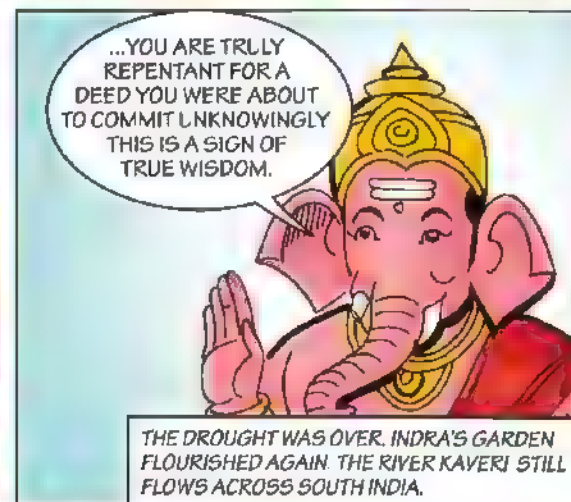
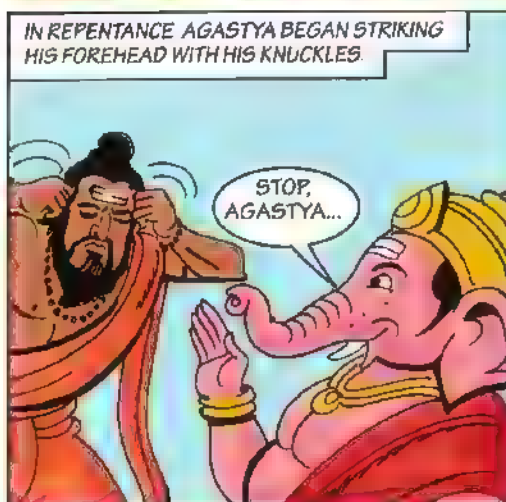
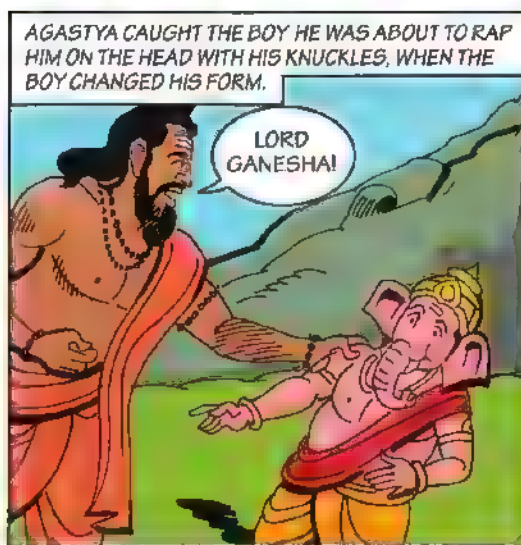


I WILL PROPITATE
SHIVA WITH FLOWERS
FROM MY GARDEN
AND ASK HIM FOR HELP
AGAINST THE WICKED
SURAPADMAN.



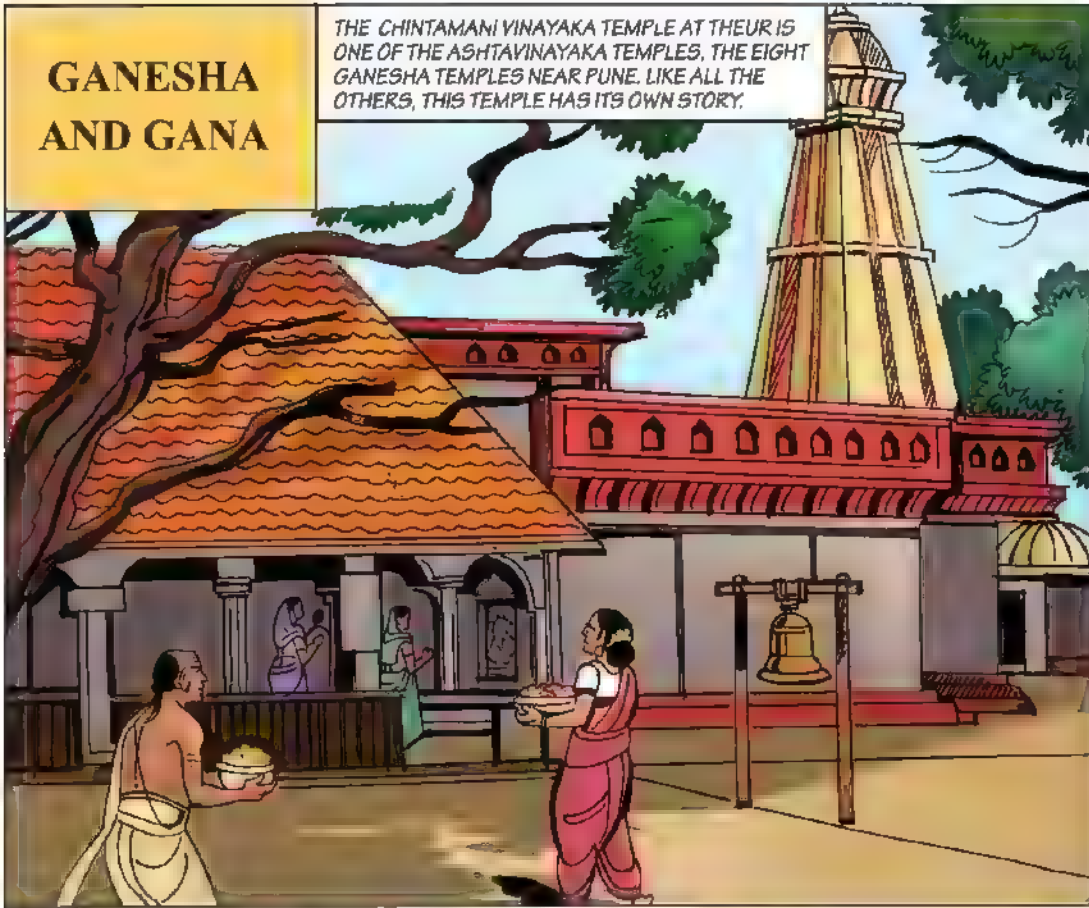




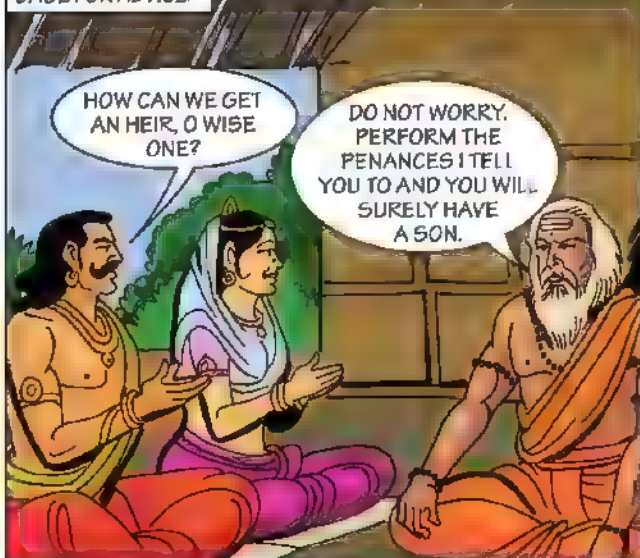


GANESHA AND GANA

THE CHINTAMANI VINAYAKA TEMPLE AT THEUR IS ONE OF THE ASHTAVINAYAKA TEMPLES, THE EIGHT GANESHA TEMPLES NEAR PUNE. LIKE ALL THE OTHERS, THIS TEMPLE HAS ITS OWN STORY.

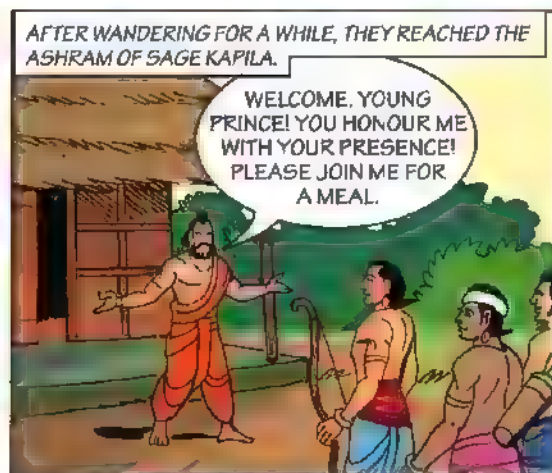
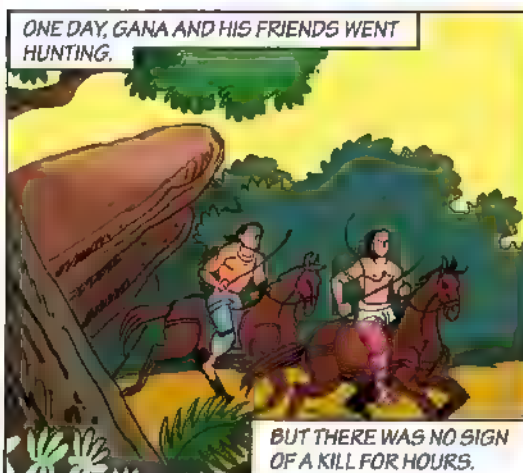
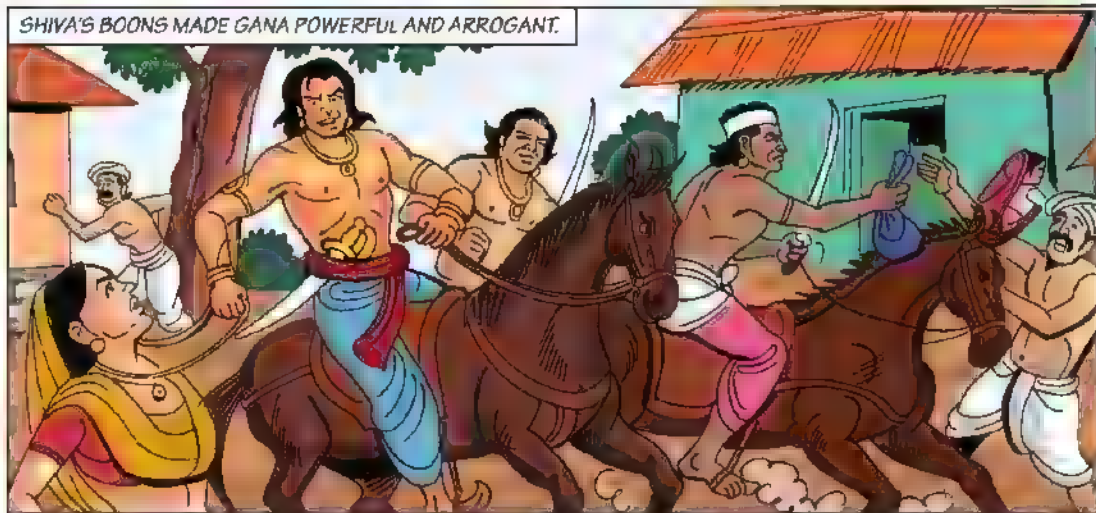
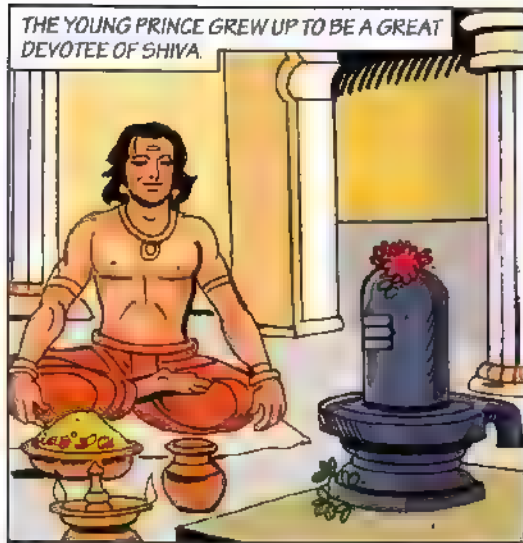


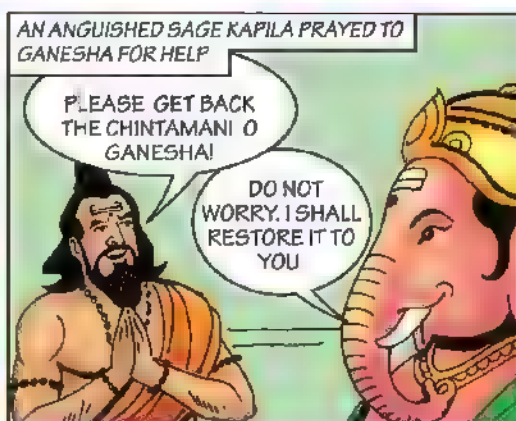
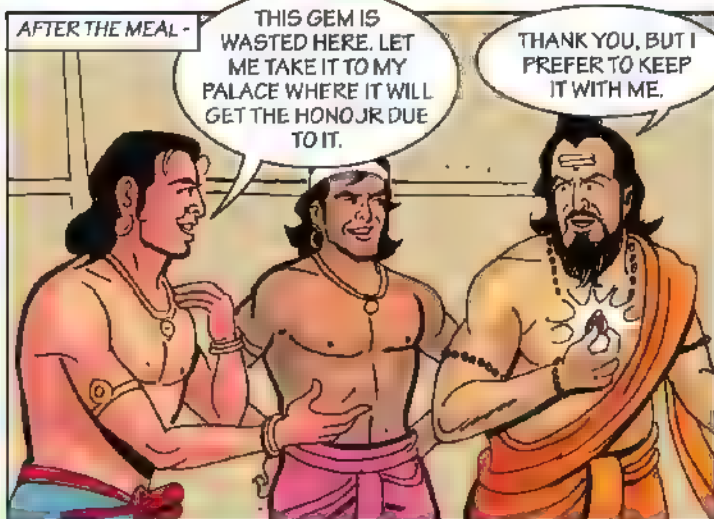
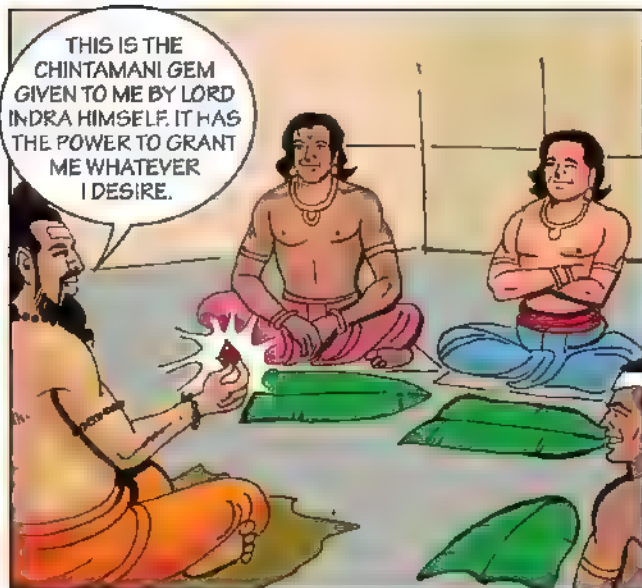
KING ABHISHEK AND HIS BEAUTIFUL QUEEN GUNAVATI, WERE FULL OF DESPAIR FOR THEY HAD NO CHILDREN. THEY WENT TO A SAGE FOR ADVICE.

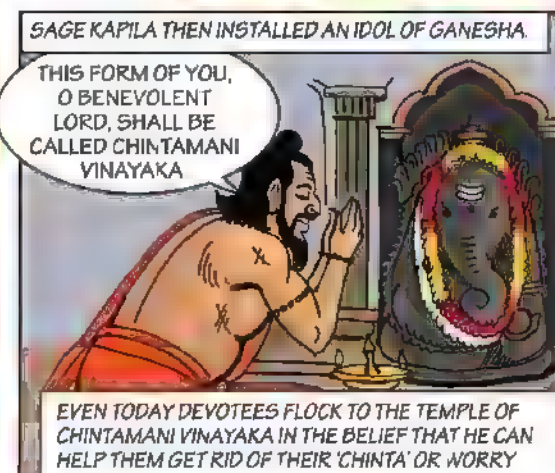
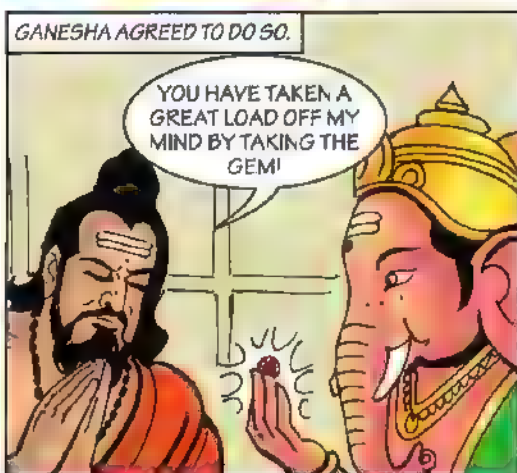
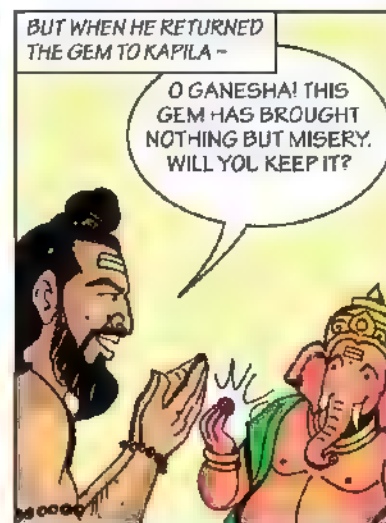
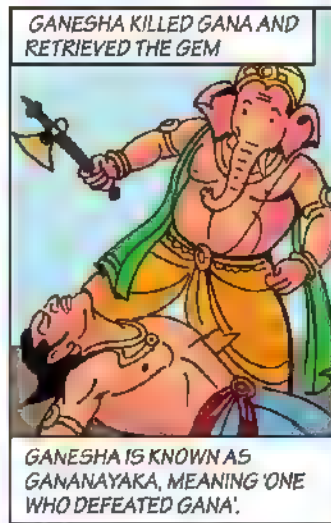
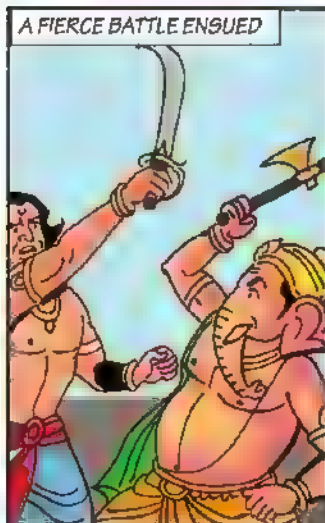
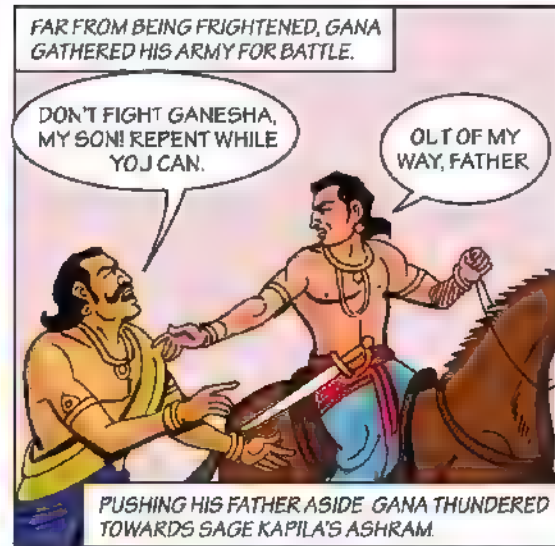


JUST AS THE SAGE HAD PREDICTED-



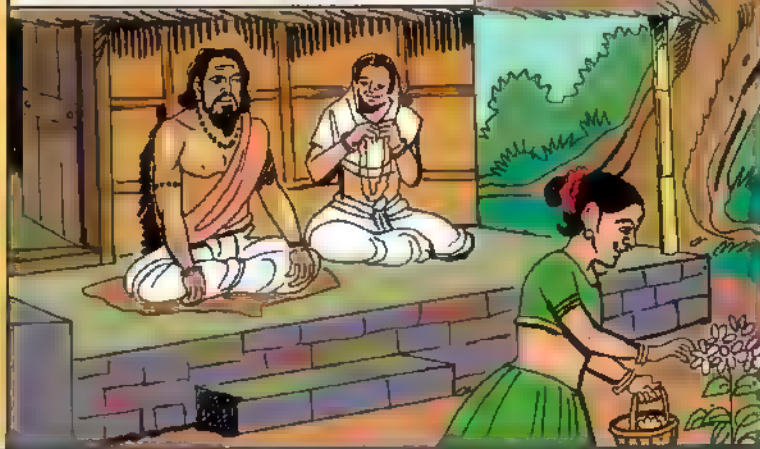






THE LEGEND OF SHAMI AND MANDAR

SAGE AURAVA WAS A LEARNED BRAHMIN, WHOSE FACE SHONE WITH THE RADIANCE OF KNOWLEDGE. TO HIM AND HIS WIFE WAS BORN A BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER NAMED SHAMI.

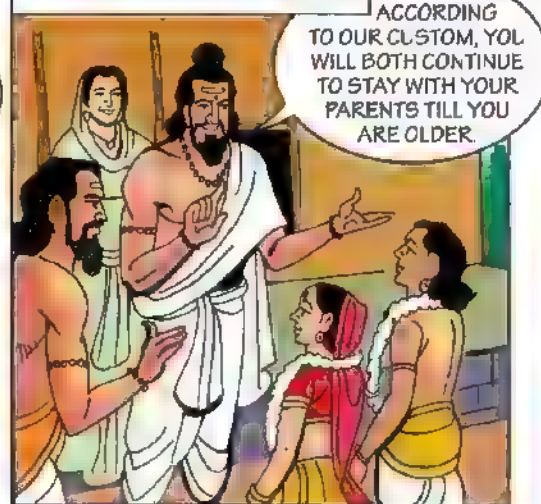


WHEN SHAMI WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD -

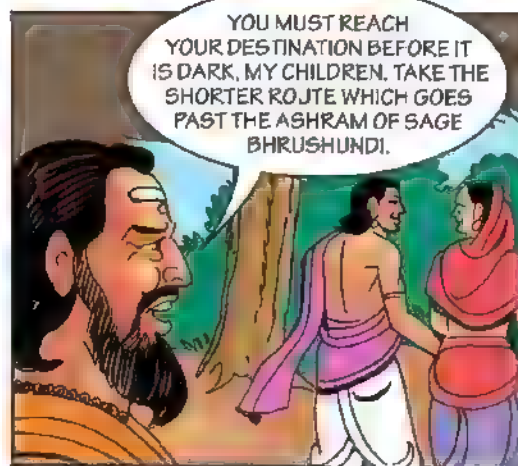


IN THOSE DAYS IT WAS THE CUSTOM TO GET SMALL CHILDREN MARRIED

AFTER THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY



AFTER SOME YEARS, MANDAR WENT TO SAGE AURAVA'S ASHRAM.



BHRUSHUNDI HAD EARLIER BEEN A FISHERMAN WHO HAD TURNED TO THIEVING ONCE. HE STOPPED THE RISHI MUGDALA TO ROB HIM.



HAND OVER YOUR BELONGINGS!

BUT THE SAGE DID NOT DO AS BHRUSHUNDI DEMANDED. INSTEAD -



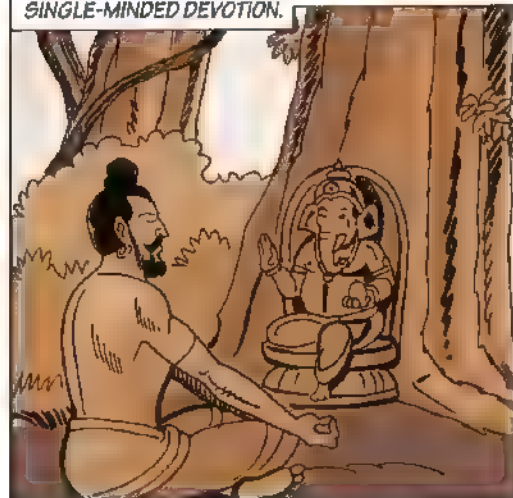
AAH! WHAT IS THIS DAZZLING LIGHT THAT EMANATES FROM THE RISHI?

BHRUSHUNDI REALISED HE WAS IN THE PRESENCE OF A GREAT POWER AND ASKED FOR FORGIVENESS.

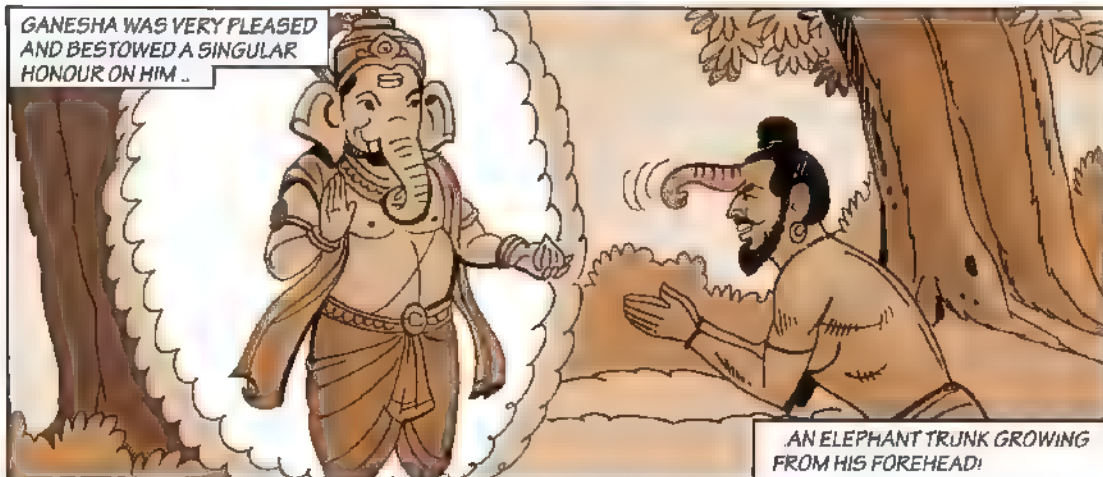


RISE, MY SON PRAY TO LORD GANESHA AND YOUR PAST SINS WILL BE FORGIVEN.

BHRUSHUNDI TOOK THE SAGE'S ADVICE TO HEART AND STARTED WORSHIPPING GANESHA WITH SINGLE-MINDED DEVOTION.

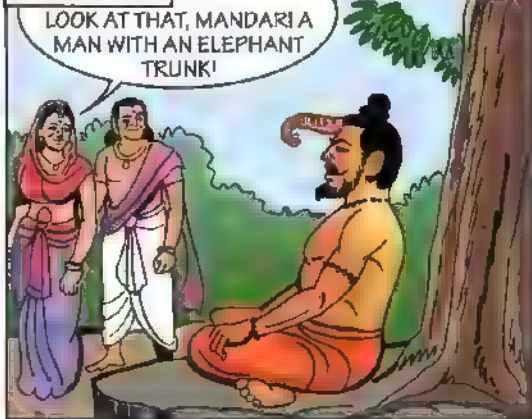


GANESHA WAS VERY PLEASED AND BESTOWED A SINGULAR HONOUR ON HIM.



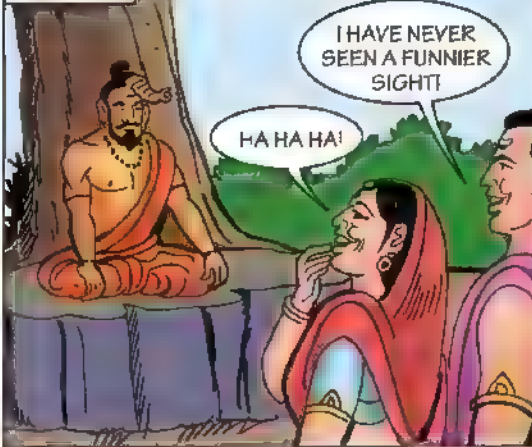
AN ELEPHANT TRUNK GROWING FROM HIS FOREHEAD!

ON THEIR WAY TO SAGE SHAUNAK'S ASHRAM SHAMI AND MANDAR PASSED BHRUSHUNDI MEDITATING UNDER A TREE.



LOOK AT THAT, MANDAR! A MAN WITH AN ELEPHANT TRUNK!

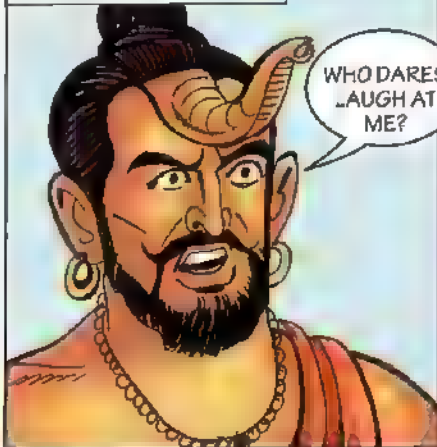
THE TWO BURST INTO UNCONTROLLABLE LAUGHTER



I HAVE NEVER SEEN A FUNNIER SIGHT!

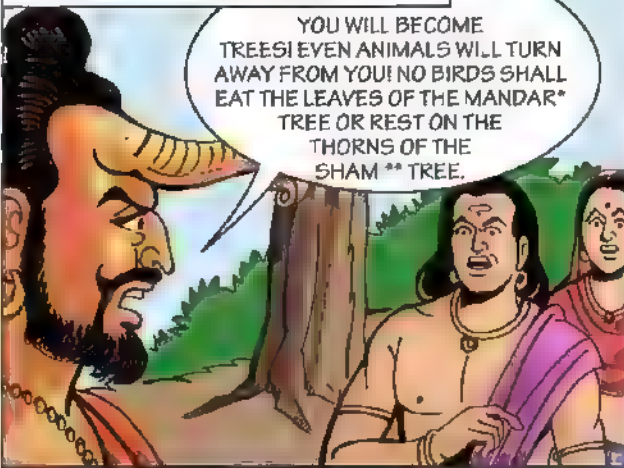
HA HA HA!

BHRUSHUNDI'S EYES FLEW OPEN. THEY BLAZED WITH ANGER.



WHO DARES LAUGH AT ME?

IN HIS RAGE, HE CURSED THE YOUNG COUPLE.



YOU WILL BECOME TREES! EVEN ANIMALS WILL TURN AWAY FROM YOU! NO BIRDS SHALL EAT THE LEAVES OF THE MANDAR* TREE OR REST ON THE THORNS OF THE SHAM** TREE.

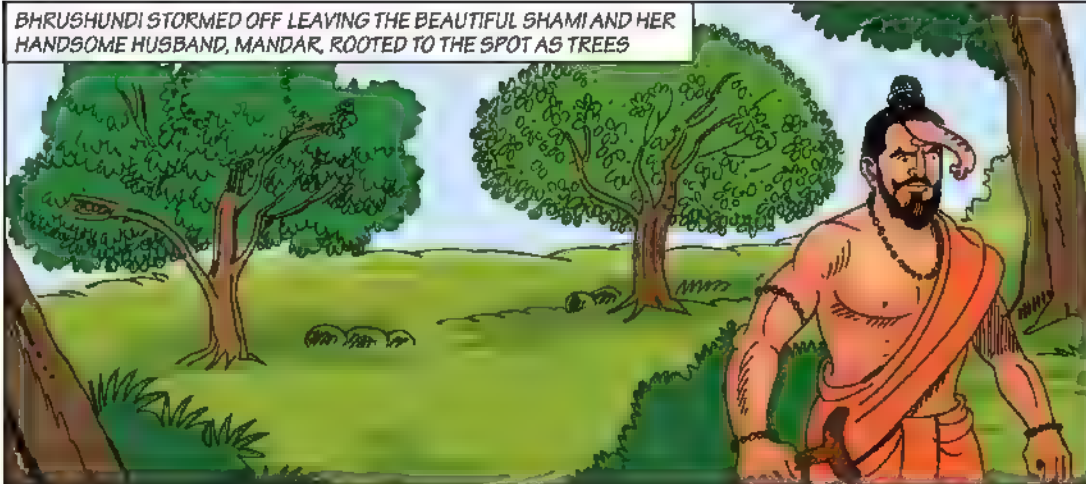


MANDAR! MY ARMS

SHAMI I CAN'T MOVE!

*THE INDIAN CORAL TREE
** INDIAN MESQUITE TREE

BHRUSHUNDI STORMED OFF LEAVING THE BEAUTIFUL SHAMI AND HER HANDSOME HUSBAND, MANDAR, ROOTED TO THE SPOT AS TREES

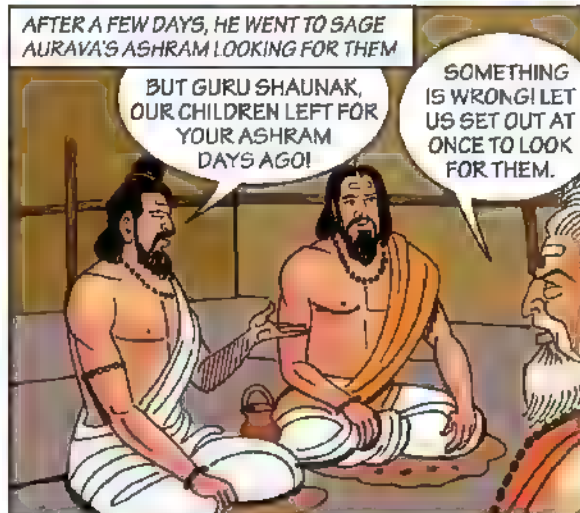


MEANWHILE GURU SHAUNAK WAITED ANXIOUSLY FOR SHAMI AND MANDAR



WHY ARE THEY TAKING SO LONG TO COME?

AFTER A FEW DAYS, HE WENT TO SAGE AURAVA'S ASHRAM LOOKING FOR THEM



BUT GURU SHAUNAK, OUR CHILDREN LEFT FOR YOUR ASHRAM DAYS AGO!

SOMETHING IS WRONG! LET US SET OUT AT ONCE TO LOOK FOR THEM.

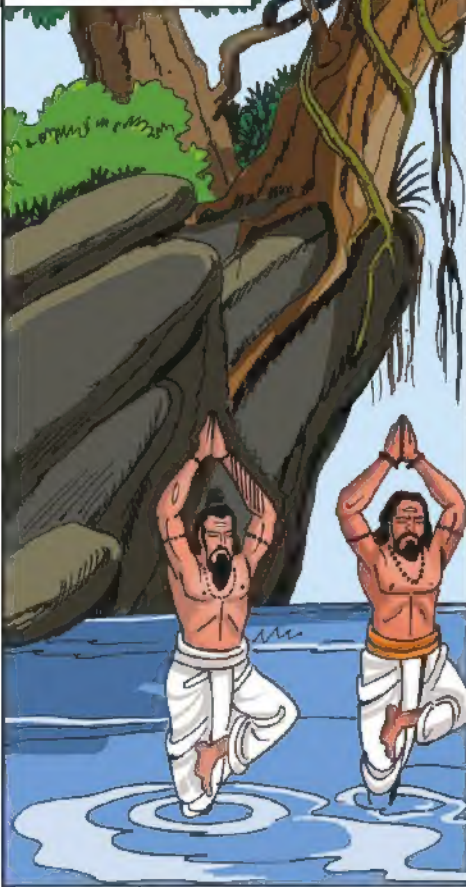
AFTER DAYS OF SEARCHING THEY CAME TO BHRUSHUNDI'S ASHRAM WHERE THEY HEARD OF THE FATE THAT HAD BEFALLEN THEIR CHILDREN.



MY BELOVED SHAMI!

ALASI MANDAR, MY DEAREST SON!

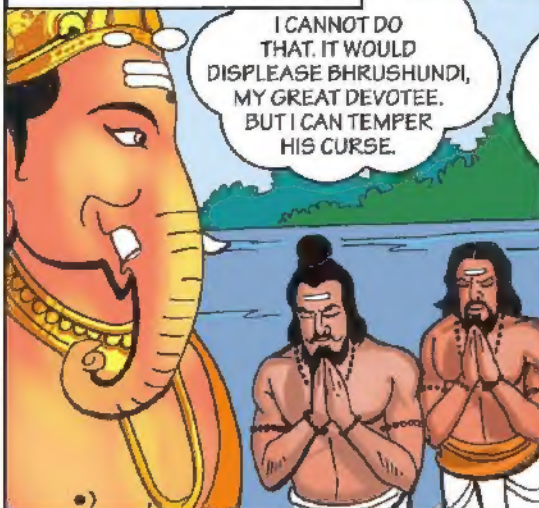
THE TWO FATHERS DECIDED TO APPEAL TO GANESHA FOR HELP AND BEGAN PRACTISING TERRIBLE AUSTERITIES.



AT LAST, GANESHA APPEARED BEFORE THEM IN AN IMPOSING FORM.

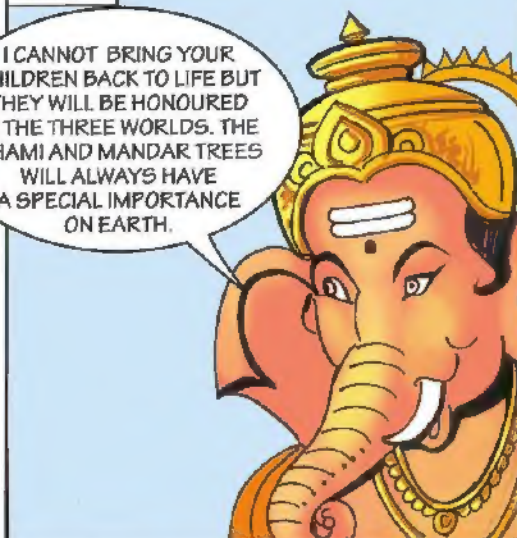


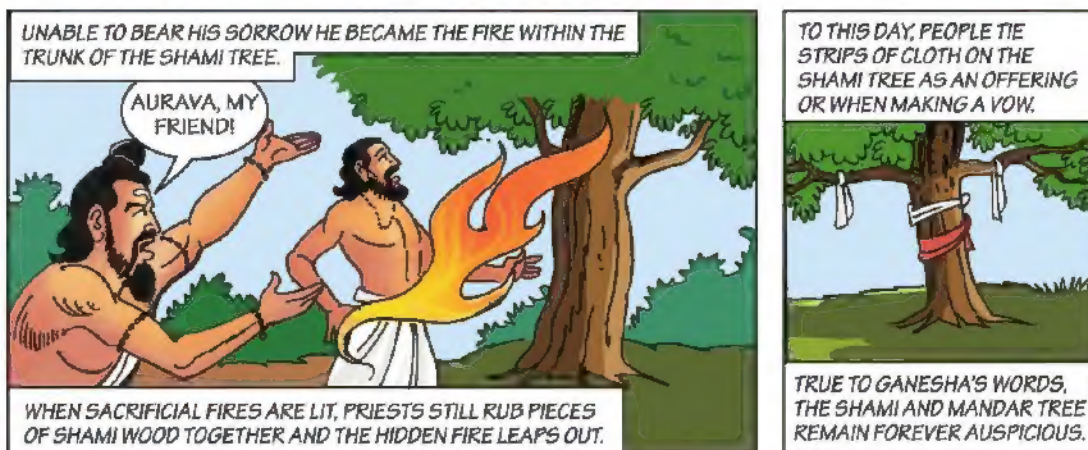
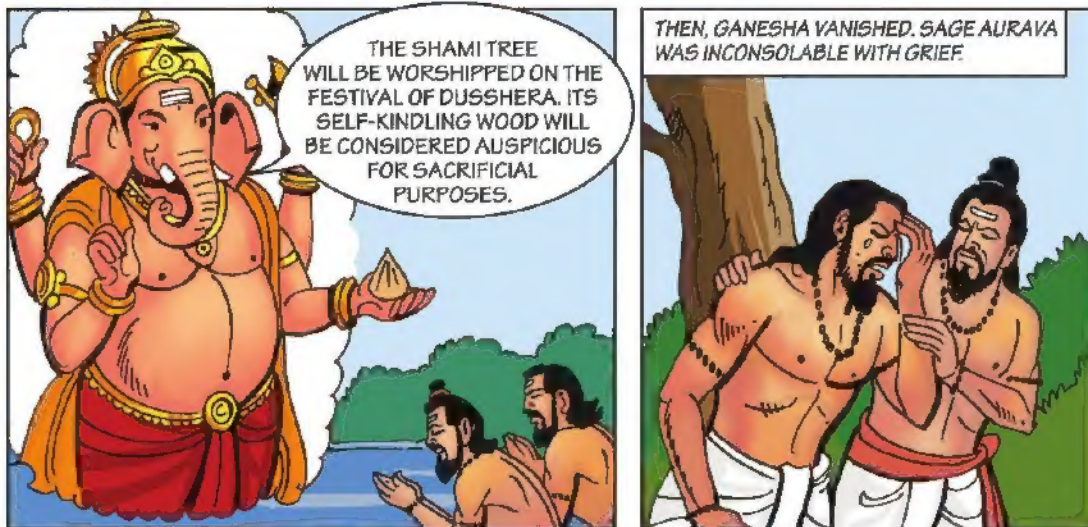
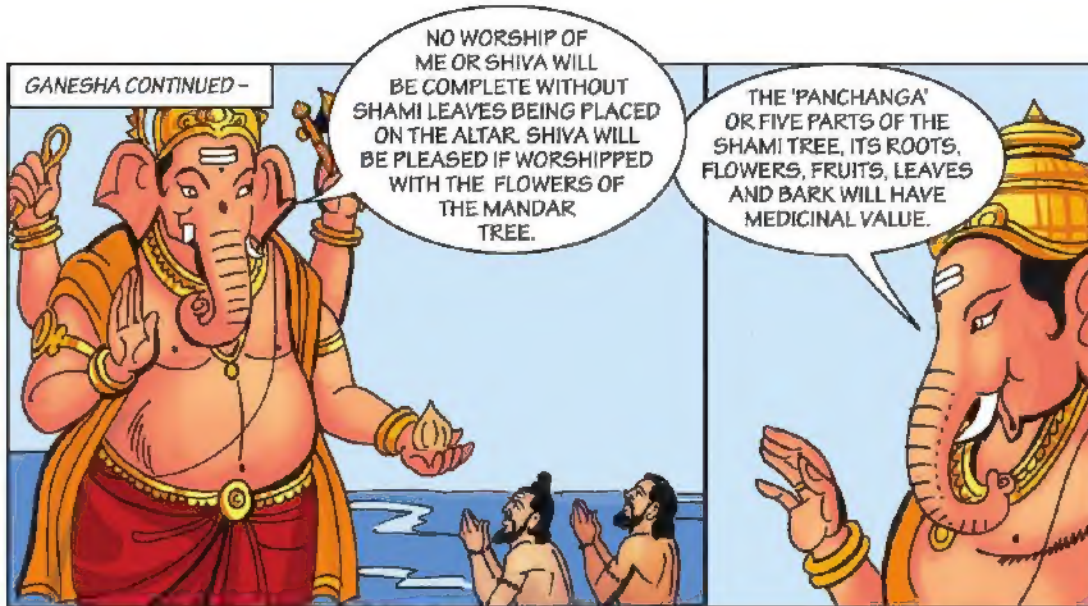
THEY BEGGED GANESHA TO RESTORE THEIR CHILDREN, BUT GANESHA WAS IN A DILEMMA.



FINALLY -

I CANNOT BRING YOUR CHILDREN BACK TO LIFE BUT THEY WILL BE HONOURED IN THE THREE WORLDS. THE SHAMI AND MANDAR TREES WILL ALWAYS HAVE A SPECIAL IMPORTANCE ON EARTH.





WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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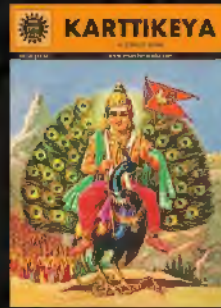
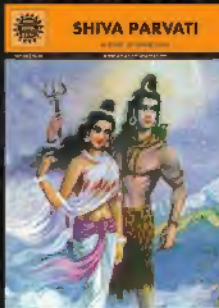
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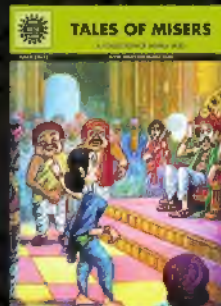
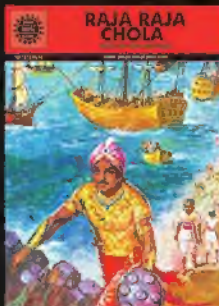
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